

## Notes & Queries

*The Journal welcomes responses to previously published articles, statements on Hawaiian and Pacific history, and queries for information that will assist research. Opinions expressed here and elsewhere in the pages of the Journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Board or the Hawaiian Historical Society.*

### EDUARD ARNING'S HAWAIIAN COLLECTIONS

Readers of *The Hawaiian Journal of History* will be interested in a new photographic resource now available for research at the Hawaiian Historical Society. The photographs were taken by Dr. Eduard Arning between 1884 and 1886. Arning, a microbiologist from Germany, came to Hawai'i under the aegis of King Kalākaua to study leprosy.<sup>1</sup> While in Hawai'i, Arning made a large collection of Hawaiian artifacts and took photographs wherever he went. His collection of some five hundred artifacts is now in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, Germany.

Although a monograph and two articles about the artifacts have been published in German, the collection is virtually unknown in Hawai'i. Since 1969 I have been researching Pacific artifact collections in European museums, and I realized the importance of the Hawaiian collection in Berlin. Indeed, the Arning collection of artifacts forms one of three most important collections of Hawaiian materials outside of Hawai'i that were collected by a single individual or voyage and are documented to time and place. The other two are the collections from Cook's third voyage (which are dispersed all over the world) and the collection from the U.S. Exploring Expedition (also in various collections).

As Arning's published monograph included a few photographs, I hypothesized that there must be more photographs somewhere in Germany that went with the collection. Following up on a number of

clues, I began a search for the negatives and finally in 1994 located them in the Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde. At the time, not knowing how many negatives there were, the condition of the glass plates, or even what they depicted, at a board meeting of the trustees of the Hawaiian Historical Society, I asked if someone was willing to give a donation without knowing what, if anything, would be the result. C. Dudley Pratt, Jr., was willing. Fortunately, we were not disappointed—for not only did Dr. Arning carry home with him the remarkable number of at least 237 glass plates, he also made a catalog that documented the place and date of every photograph. Even I did not suspect the extent of the photographs or how important they would be. It is truly amazing that these glass plates remained unharmed after nearly 110 years and their possible destruction during World War II.

Thanks to the financial support of eighteen donors, all 237 known glass plates have been printed and received by the Hawaiian Historical Society, and it appears that the photographs form the largest collection of nineteenth-century Hawaiian photographs outside of Hawai'i and the only large photograph collection from this time period meticulously documented to time and place.

Because they are documented, the photographs add historical data to other well-known images that are not documented. For example, the often-reproduced images of *hula* at 'Iolani Palace, said to be from Kalākaua's jubilee celebration in November 1886, now appear to be from November 1885. Very similar photographs, with comparable tents and other details, are documented by Arning to have been taken on November 16, 1885. And it is not possible that Arning made a mistake, because he was not in Hawai'i in November 1886.

Arning also gives further information, such as that the group in the photograph reproduced here as fig. 1 was from Hanapepe, Kaua'i. The charming photograph of the dancers in white dresses, reproduced here as fig. 2, illustrates a performance that seems not to have been depicted by others. This photograph is also of interest in that two *pahu* drums are shown (at the far right of the scene).

The photographs are part of a comprehensive ethnographic collection made by Dr. Arning in Hawai'i between 1883 and 1886, which also includes the numerous artifacts now in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, as well as a number of objects given or ex-



FIG. 1. Eduard Arning recorded these *hula* dancers from Hanapepe, Kaua'i, at a celebration of King Kalākaua's birthday at 'Iolani Palace on November 16, 1885. (Eduard Arning Collection 1.189, Hawaiian Historical Society.)

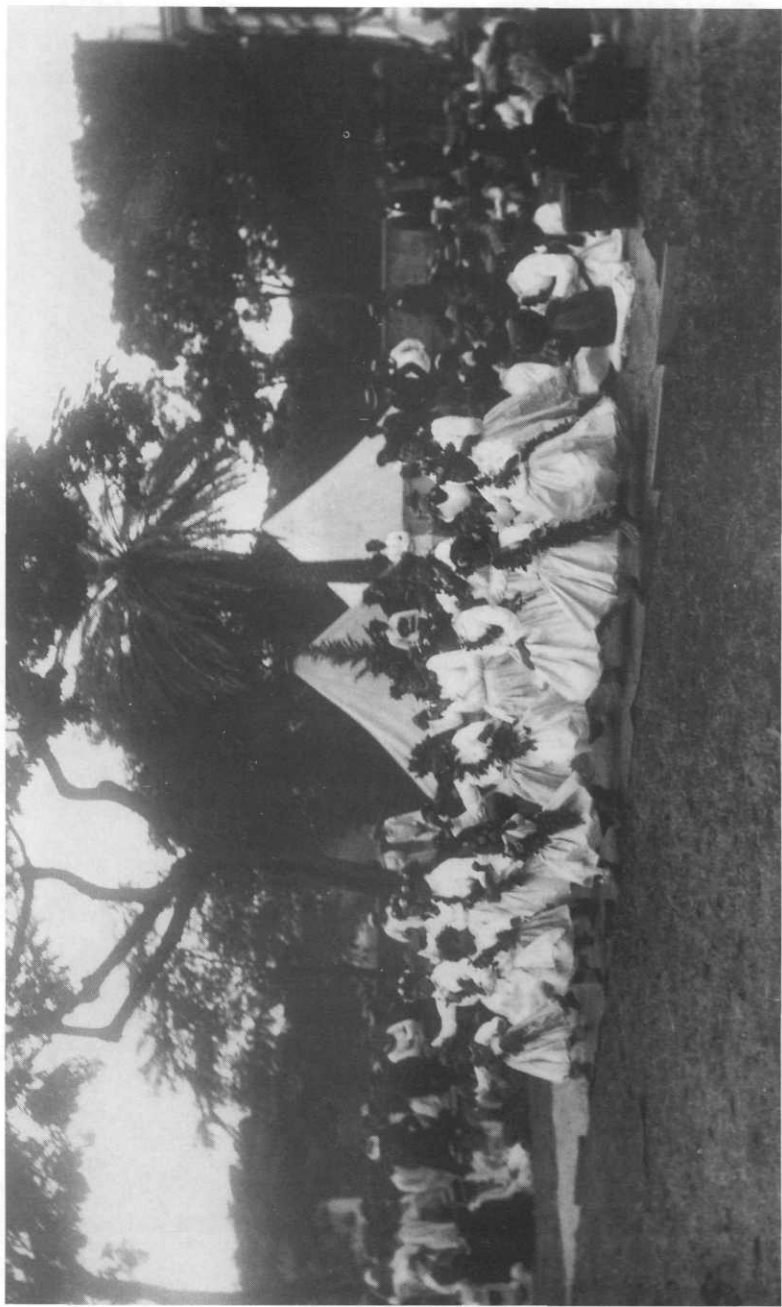


FIG. 2. This photograph by Eduard Arning, taken at Iolani Palace on November 16, 1885, shows a *hula* performance that appears not to have been preserved in any other photographs. (Eduard Arning Collection 1.187, Hawaiian Historical Society.)

changed to other museums in Germany. In the 1970s, under the auspices of the Pacific Translators Committee and the Friends of the Library of Hawai'i, the three publications that deal with the artifacts were translated into English by Michael and Barbara Mueller-Ali and by Ilse Koehler Grimm.

All of this material is being prepared for publication—which is projected to include Arning's photographs, translations of the three German publications, and photographs of the artifacts now in Berlin.

Submitted by Adrienne L. Kaeppler  
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#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> See O.A. Bushnell, "Dr. Edward Arning, The First Microbiologist in Hawaii," *HJH* 1 (1967): 3-30.

#### TIN FOIL AND WAX: HAWAII'S FIRST PHONOGRAPHS AND RECORDS

Thomas A. Edison conceived and built the world's first phonograph late in 1877.<sup>1</sup> The invention was announced in a letter published by *Scientific American* in its issue of November 17, 1877, and limited production soon followed. Early models both recorded and reproduced sound using tin foil wrapped around a cylinder.<sup>2</sup>

The first phonograph to reach Hawai'i arrived January 29, 1879, in the possession of J.W. Kohler, a thirty-nine-year-old passenger aboard the *Australia*. Honolulu readers learned of this marvel by way of an article in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* on February 1, 1879:

THE PHONOGRAPH.—Our community is promised a novel treat quite shortly. We learn that a gentleman recently arrived from San Francisco, en route for New Zealand, has in his possession one of the famed Edison phonographs, or Talking Machines, besides the "Singing Telephone," with which a public exhibition will be given after due notice. Mr. Kohler, the gentleman in question, will, by Royal permission, first exhibit his novel apparatus before the Court at Iolani Palace.<sup>3</sup>

Following the demonstration before King Kalākaua and his court on February 1, Kohler gave five public performances at the Royal Hawaiian Theatre, the first on February 14 and the last on February 22. Besides demonstrating the phonograph, Kohler presented "stereoscopticon" [*sic*] slides of works of art, the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, and Biblical scenes. At his final showing he was assisted "as volunteers, by Messrs. H.H. Williams, A. Wilson Snow, Jas. Luproil, the Hawaiian Minstrels, and Mr. Berger on the piano," plus a troupe of amateur gymnasts. The *Hawaiian Gazette* reviewer deemed the phonograph "on too small a scale, we think, for exhibition except in a small room" but adequate to demonstrate at least the principle of sound reproduction.<sup>4</sup>

The phonograph next became newsworthy early in 1891, when King Kalākaua spoke for ten minutes into an Edison phonograph placed next to his death bed in San Francisco. W.H. Aldrich brought the "little waxen scroll" back to Hawai'i. Translated from the Hawaiian, His Majesty's first recorded words were: "We greet each other—We greet each other. I learn that you are to go with me to my country; to Honolulu. There you will tell my people that which I say to you here!"<sup>5</sup> Returned to the Islands, the wax cylinder was played over and over for interested persons and groups, and by the 1920s it no longer was audible. It now reposes in the Bishop Museum, after efforts to restore it through modern technology proved futile.<sup>6</sup>

On February 20, 1891, Honolulu residents had "the opportunity of listening to the registered vocalizations of the Phonograph at the [Hawaiian] Hotel, recently received per *Gaelic* from San Francisco, en route for Japan and China."<sup>7</sup>

Captain Berger, who had played the piano for the 1879 demonstration, returned twelve years later with his full orchestra. In February and March 1891, Berger reportedly "directed the recording of songs by the Royal Hawaiian Band, using the Ediphone process." The song titles and company label are unknown.<sup>8</sup>

Native Hawaiian music apparently made its recorded debut soon afterwards. On November 2, 1891, the *Advertiser* reported that "the phonograph did a land office business last Saturday [October 31] at Ludwigsen & Cron's candy store." O. Stoeckle, visiting Hawai'i to present a recorded concert of "speeches, vocal and instrumental

music, etc., etc.” in the YMCA Hall and on the Neighbor Islands, was displaying his phonograph and a “new selection of music” at the candy store. Five days later the paper announced that “The Quintette Club will sing into the phonograph this morning.” On November 9, the *Advertiser* added that “the phonograph has records of native music,” the first such mention of recorded Hawaiian airs; unfortunately, the article failed to list either the song titles or the performers’ names.<sup>9</sup>

Home phonographs soon came onto the market. The “first commercial gramophones and gramophone [disc] records” were manufactured in 1889 by a toy factory in Germany. Five years later the American Graphophone Co. introduced the “first spring-driven talking machines suitable for home entertainment.”<sup>10</sup>

The earliest Island advertisements for home phonographs appeared in Honolulu newspapers in December 1898, when Wall, Nichols Co. included both Graphophones and Gramophones in its list of “Holiday Gifts at Santa Claus Emporium.” In an 1899 ad, Bergstrom Music Co. boasted “Goods That Talk!...a new supply of GRAM-O-PHONES and New Records.” Hawaiian News Co. countered with “TALK IS CHEAP When You Buy an Edison Phonograph and Records.”<sup>11</sup>

The earliest known commercial records of “Hawaiian” music were two Edison cylinders issued at the end of the nineteenth century. One was “Honolulu Cake Walk,” a banjo solo (!) by Vess L. Ossman released between late 1898 and February 1900; the other was “My Honolulu Lady,” sung by Dan W. Quinn and dated either May 1899 or April 1901. Far more authentic, presumably, were two wax cylinders listed in a 1901 Columbia Records catalogue, “Aloha Oe” and “Kuu Pua i Paoakalani.” Labeled “Vocal Solos in Hawaiian,” these listings carried no indications of the name or sex of the singer.<sup>12</sup>

There may also have been some other waxings of Hawaiian songs at the turn of the century. July Paka reportedly recorded several numbers at Edison’s San Francisco plant in 1899, and Dorothy Kahananui remembered once hearing cylinders of “Mai Poina ‘Oe Ta’u” and either “Nani Wale Lihu’e” or “Akahi Ho’i” she thought were made about the same time.<sup>13</sup>

More years were to pass before the advent of electrical recording,

long-playing microgroove records, tape cassettes, stereo discs, and compact digital discs. But by 1900 phonographs and phonograph records were well established in Hawai'i, and the modern era was underway.

Submitted by Robert C. Schmitt

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This article is a revised version of Robert C. Schmitt, "Hawaii's First Phonographs," *Hawaii Historical Review* 2 (July 1967): 394-95.
- <sup>2</sup> Roland Gelatt, *The Fabulous Phonograph; From Edison to Stereo*, rev. ed. (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965) 321; Oliver Read and Walter L. Welch, *From Tin Foil to Stereo: Evolution of the Phonograph*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, Kansas City, and New York: Howard W. Sams & Co. and The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1976) 11-14.
- <sup>3</sup> Passenger Manifest Index, AH; PCA 1 Feb. 1879: 3.
- <sup>4</sup> HG 12 Feb. 1879: 3, adv. and news item; PCA 15 Feb. 1879: 3; HG 19 Feb. 1879: 3; PCA 22 Feb. 1879: 2; HG 26 Feb. 1879: 3.
- <sup>5</sup> PCA 6 Feb. 1891: 2; PCA 20 Feb. 1891: 3.
- <sup>6</sup> Conversation with E.H. Bryan, Jr., 14 Mar. 1967, and Bishop Museum archives personnel, 20 June 1994; HSB 9 Nov. 1972: C-7.
- <sup>7</sup> F March 1891: 22.
- <sup>8</sup> George S. Kanahele, ed., *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* (Honolulu: UP of Hawaii, 1979) 35, 343.
- <sup>9</sup> PCA 2 Nov. 1891: 3; PCA 4 Nov. 1891: 5; PCA 7 Nov. 1891: 3; PCA 9 Nov. 1891: 3; PCA 18 Feb. 1893: 5.
- <sup>10</sup> Gelatt, *Fabulous Phonograph* 322.
- <sup>11</sup> PCA 16 Dec. 1898: 9; PCA 6 Dec. 1899: 10; PP March 1900: 15.
- <sup>12</sup> Robert C. Schmitt, "Some Firsts in Island Leisure," *HJH* 12 (1978): 106, and "Some 'Firsts' that weren't," *HJH* 21 (1987): 156-57.
- <sup>13</sup> Kanahele, *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* 388; Schmitt, "Some Firsts in Island Leisure" 106, 116.

#### THE IPAPANDI CHAPEL MURALS: AN UPDATE

For those interested in the fate and condition of the Juliette May Fraser painted chapel described by Nancy J. Morris in "The Murals of Ipapandi Chapel, Chios: A Cultural Bridge Between Greece and Hawai'i" in vol. 28 of the *Journal* (1994), be assured the news is all good.

In April of 1994, my traveling companion, Nora Kirkpatrick, and I extended a tour of Greece and the Greek Islands when we parted



from the Hawai'i tour group in Athens. The group returned to Honolulu, and we went to Chios, the island Nancy and Al Morris had visited two years earlier.

We took a small plane to the tiny Chios airport, having been carefully instructed by Nancy Morris as to dress and respectful behavior. We told the taxi driver we wanted the Kyma hotel, suggested by Morris as one of the places where Fraser and David Asherman had stayed before leasing the house with a studio. The taxi driver looked puzzled at our mispronunciation of the hotel name, but eventually his face lit up and he loudly corrected us, then sped us off to its door.

The Kyma was built in 1917 as a waterfront villa for the family of John Livanos of Greek shipping fame. It was modeled on the Villa Roman near Rome. A new wing was added in 1972. Since we were early for the tourist season, there appeared to be very few guests.

An elderly gentleman, probably the same one mentioned in the Morris article, still dozed behind his newspaper at his desk in the lobby. He became alert at our approach and pulled down a paper note taped to the top of the desk which read "Goodell and Kirkpatrick." We were expected and were shown to a room on the top-most of the four floors. The room was sparsely furnished but appeared to be entirely of marble, including the bathroom fixtures. A very large marble balcony looked out over the Aegean Sea to Turkey five miles away.

We next sought out a taxi at the town square and tried to indicate our destination to be a church in Vavili village about eight miles away. The driver first took us to an ancient and interesting church which was being restored but was the wrong church. Anyone who has tried to communicate through an almost complete language barrier will sympathize with our efforts to indicate this wasn't our destination, although we sometimes surprised ourselves by being able to read some of the signs by dredging up long ago college sorority experience.

On the village square, the only street wide enough for a taxi, the driver parked and left us for a few minutes while he spoke to several elderly men drinking coffee at small tables. Suddenly one of them cried "Americanos, Americanos!" and gestured broadly for us to follow him up a narrow but paved street. Neither of us remembers

seeing the name Fraser on the street, but at the top we recognized the tiny chapel from photos and descriptions from the Morris visit.

The keys quickly materialized, and we were allowed inside. The only evidence of the vandals' destruction described in the article was a small portion of a lower wall, which had obviously been defaced but was being restored. Everything else was in perfect order.

Some villagers gathered outside, and we heard a few recognizable words: Americanos, Hawai'i, Honolulu, Fraser, and so on.

I rushed back to the taxi in the square for more film. I covered the inside and Nora the outside. Although we both consider our efforts with cameras far from professional, our pictures were gratifying to the Morrises, as they clearly show restoration nearly complete.

Submitted by Lela Goodell